



THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ON CONSUMER PURCHASING DECISIONS IN THE COSMETIC INDUSTRY

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Abstract : Social media describes online platforms that enable users to produce, distribute, and engage with material in a collaborative setting, characterised by their interactive and community-driven nature. Social media's widespread adoption has a major impact on consumer behaviour, especially in the cosmetics sector. This study looks into how social media affects customers' decisions to buy cosmetics. It emphasizes how social media plays a crucial role in influencing cosmetic purchase decisions, underscoring the significance of social media techniques that work for cosmetic brands. The findings offer insightful information to marketers, highlighting the importance of genuine partnerships, authentic influencers, visually appealing content, and ethical consumer engagement. The study shows that social media has a strong influence on beauty product purchase behaviour.

Index Terms - Social media, cosmetic products, purchasing decision, influencer marketing, consumer behaviour.

I. INTRODUCTION

Any chemical used to clean, enhance, or modify the skin, hair, nails, or teeth is referred to as a "cosmetic". Cosmetics include grooming products like soap, shampoo, shaving cream, and deodorant, as well as beauty preparations like makeup, perfume, skin lotion, nail polish, and manicure kits. The human body is treated with cosmetics and personal care items to clean, beautify, promote attractiveness, or alter its appearance. Even though women have historically worn most modern makeup, more men are gradually adopting traditionally feminine cosmetics to enhance their facial features. Most people are not prepared to leave the house without makeup on: women aged 18-34 use makeup the most, at 85%, while 77% of women aged 55+ wear makeup. This makes the cosmetics sector a key area of concern for marketers.

Marketers have found that a significant portion of the public is influenced by social media to purchase and become aware of cosmetic items. Due to their ability to target more affluent markets, lower marketing costs, and increase brand awareness, social media platforms have become very important to the cosmetics industry and have completely transformed it. One of the many reasons cosmetics firms are well represented on social media is the excellent communication these brands maintain with their customers. For this reason, this study aims to determine the extent to which social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook Messenger affect the purchasing decisions of cosmetics consumers.

1.1 India Cosmetic Market: Recent Developments

- Shiseido opened its first flagship location in Mumbai in October 2023, in collaboration with its sole Indian partner, Baccarose Perfumes & Beauty Products Pvt. Ltd.
- In December 2023, Hindustan Unilever Ltd. separated its beauty and personal care division into two distinct organizations to better compete with the younger generation.
- In November 2023, L'Oreal India projected that rising disposable incomes and increasing per-capita spending on beauty products in India would treble its profit margin over the following three to five years.

1.2 Prominent Players in the India Cosmetic Market

Hindustan Unilever Limited, Dabur India Ltd, Marico Limited, Godrej Consumer Products Ltd, Emami Limited, L'Oreal India Pvt Ltd, ITC Limited, Khadi Natural Healthcare Ltd, Biotique, Lotus Herbals Ltd, Himalaya, VLCC Personal Care Ltd, Sugar

Cosmetics Pvt. Ltd, MyGlamm, Mamaearth, Colorbar Cosmetics, Nykaa, A.C. Cosmetics, Faces Canada, Lakme, and others. These key players are adopting growth strategies such as mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, expansion, strategic alliances, and new product launches to enhance their business operations and revenues.

1.3 Market Segmentation

The India cosmetic market is segmented by type (skin and sun care products, hair care products, deodorants and fragrances, others), by gender (men, women, unisex), and by distribution channel (hypermarkets/supermarkets, specialty stores, pharmacies, online sales channel, others). (Source: www.custommarketinsights.com/report/india-cosmetic-market)

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gaur and Vaheed (2002) observed that consumer buying behaviour normally includes a less-observed decision process that accompanies consumption, including where, how, and under what conditions consumers make their purchase of goods and services.

Rodge (2001), in a study on the influence of advertisement on consumers of different age groups and areas, found that rural consumers attached more importance to advertisements and their impact compared to urban consumers, and that rural consumers are more influenced by electronic media than print media.

B. Revathi and Dr. M. Vasantha stated that the modern market is highly competitive in nature and the consumer is king; the importance gained by the individual consumer compels marketers to study buying habits, preferences, and dislikes and revise their marketing mix accordingly (Gopinath, 2011). As the cosmetic industry in India is a growing industry, marketers should understand the factors affecting purchase decisions along with the attitude, perception, and learning patterns of consumers towards cosmetics. Consumers consider quality the most important factor while purchasing cosmetics, and also value the advice of beauticians (Gopinath, 2019). People consider cosmetics a necessary part of routine life, which is a positive insight for cosmetics marketers.

Kasim and Batra (2009) revealed that several studies on the effect of advertising appeals on consumer decision-making and purchasing intention have been carried out by market researchers and academicians to determine the factors involved in advertising appeal. Among academic researchers there is agreement that consumers more easily remember advertising messages that evoke positive emotions, and are more inclined toward the related advertised product in their purchasing intent.

2.1 Consumer Decision-Making Process

The consumer decision-making process involves figuring out what is needed, gathering information, weighing options, and deciding what to buy. It comprises five important stages:

- Stage 1: Need recognition
- Stage 2: Searching and gathering information
- Stage 3: Considering the alternatives
- Stage 4: Buying the product or service
- Stage 5: Post-purchase evaluation

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives of the Study

- 1. To investigate the role of social media influencers in shaping consumer perceptions of cosmetic products.
- 2. To examine the impact of social media advertising on consumer purchasing decisions in the cosmetic industry.
- 3. To identify the most influential social media platforms for cosmetic product promotion.
- 4. To explore the relationship between social media usage and impulse buying behaviour in the cosmetic industry.

3.2 Scope of the Study

The study examines the spending habits and purchasing trends of several cosmetic consumer segments in Bangalore, with a deeper investigation into the influence of social media influencers on their buying behaviour.

3.3 Methods of Data Collection

Primary Data: Primary data was crucial to understanding the influence of social media on consumer buying behaviour towards cosmetics products, and was collected through a structured questionnaire administered to cosmetics consumers.

Secondary Data: Relevant secondary data was collected from various sources such as the Internet, books, magazines, and articles.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Demographic Profile

The respondents' age distribution shows that the 20-30 age group accounted for 24%, the 30-40 age group for 40%, the 40-50 age group for 24%, and the 50-60 age group for 12% of respondents influenced by social media while purchasing cosmetic products (Fig. 1 and Table 1).

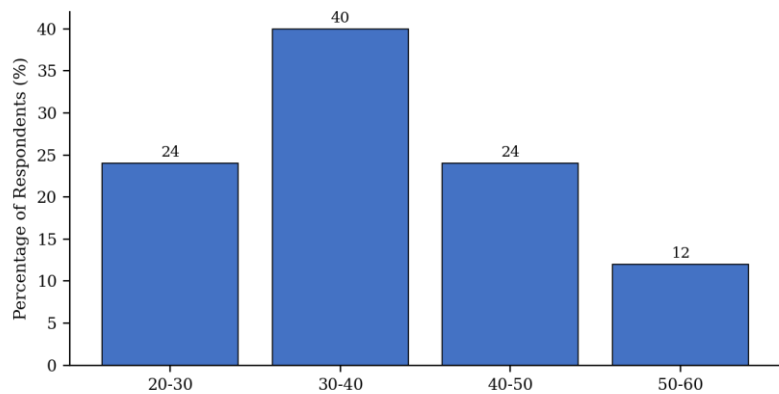


Fig.1 age-wise distribution of respondents

Table 1 age-wise distribution of respondents

Age Group	Percentage of Respondents
20-30	24%
30-40	40%
40-50	24%
50-60	12%

Of the respondents, 44 were male and 76 were female cosmetics users, indicating that female cosmetics users participated in the survey more than male users (Fig. 2 and Table 2).



Fig.2 gender-wise distribution of respondents

Table 2 gender-wise distribution of respondents

Gender	Number of Respondents
Male	44
Female	76

4.2 Social Media Usage

Instagram was used by 18.3% of respondents, YouTube by 31.6%, TikTok by 20.8%, Facebook by 15%, and Twitter by 14.16% (Fig. 3 and Table 3).

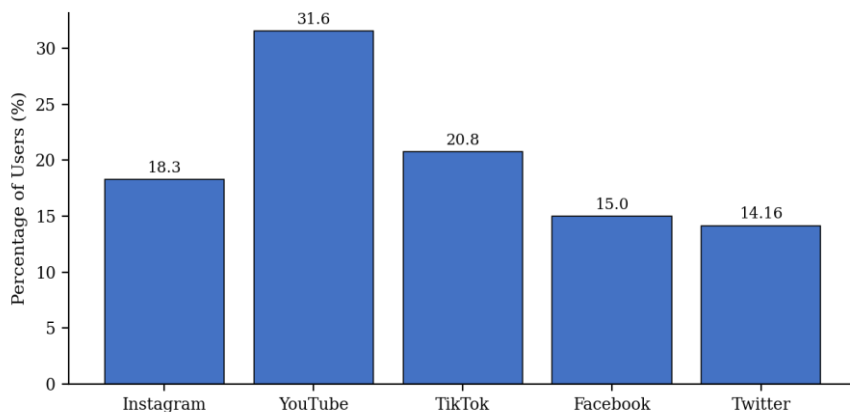


Fig.3 social media platforms used by respondents

Table 3 social media platforms used by respondents

Platform	Percentage of Users
Instagram	18.3%
YouTube	31.6%
TikTok	20.8%
Facebook	15.0%
Twitter	14.16%

Regarding frequency of social media use, 76 respondents reported using it daily, 14 several times a week, 18 about once a week, and 12 less than once a week (Fig. 4 and Table 4).

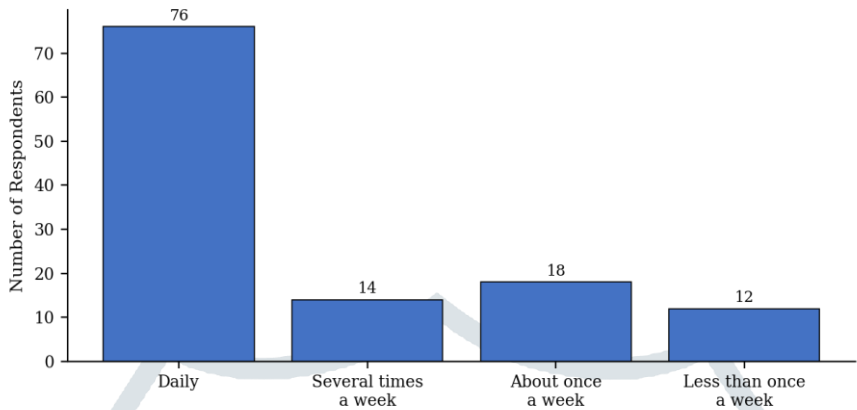


Fig.4 frequency of social media usage

Table 4 frequency of social media usage

Frequency	Number of Respondents
Daily	76
Several times a week	14
About once a week	18
Less than once a week	12

4.3 Influencer Awareness and Engagement

On awareness of beauty influencers on social media, 92 respondents answered positively and 28 answered negatively (Fig. 5 and Table 5).

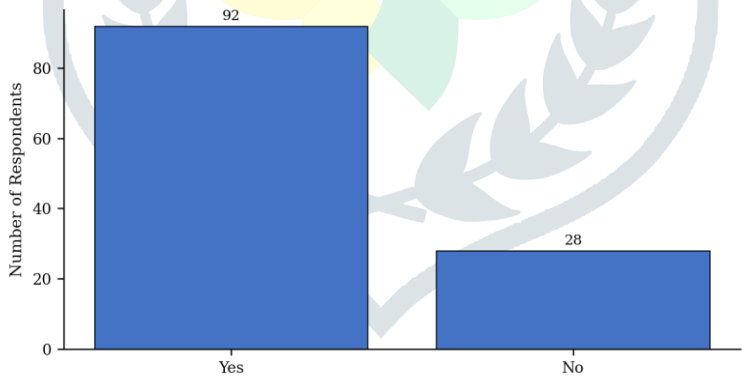


Fig.5 awareness of beauty influencers on social media

Table 5 awareness of beauty influencers on social media

Response	Number of Respondents
Yes	92
No	28

When asked whether they follow any beauty influencers, 66 respondents said "Yes" and 54 said "No" (Fig. 6 and Table 6).

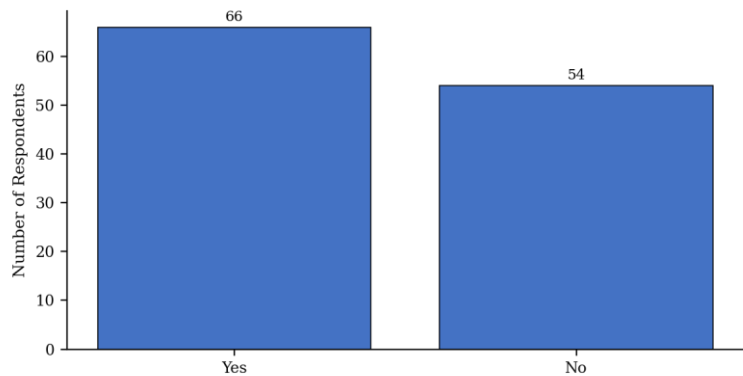


Fig.6 respondents following beauty influencers on social media

Table 6 respondents following beauty influencers on social media

Response	Number of Respondents
Yes	66
No	54

4.4 Purchasing Decisions

Regarding whether respondents had ever purchased a cosmetic product based on a social media influencer's recommendation, 38 respondents said "Yes" and 82 said "No" (Fig. 7 and Table 7).

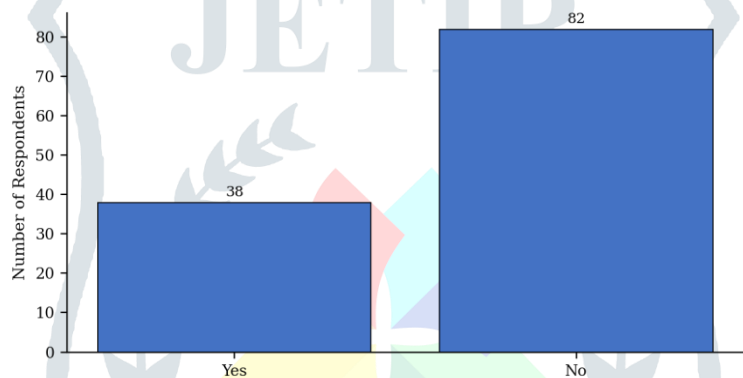


Fig.7 purchase of cosmetic products based on influencer recommendation

Table 7 purchase of cosmetic products based on influencer recommendation

Response	Number of Respondents
Yes	38
No	82

On the factors influencing cosmetics purchasing decisions, 18 respondents cited influencer recommendations, 15 cited online recommendations, 15 cited brand recommendations, 54 cited personal preferences, and 15 cited other factors (Fig. 8 and Table 8).

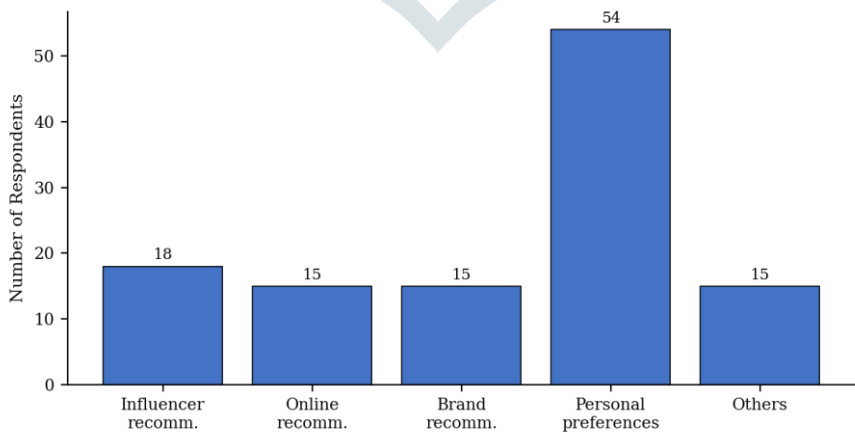


Fig.8 factors influencing cosmetics purchasing decisions

Table 8 factors influencing cosmetics purchasing decisions

Factor	Number of Respondents
Influencer recommendations	18
Online recommendations	15
Brand recommendations	15
Personal preferences	54
Others	15

4.5 Influencer Credibility and Trust

On the importance of trusting an influencer before making a purchase based on their recommendation, 42 respondents said it was very important, 35 said somewhat important, 24 said not very important, and 19 said not at all important (Fig. 9 and Table 9).

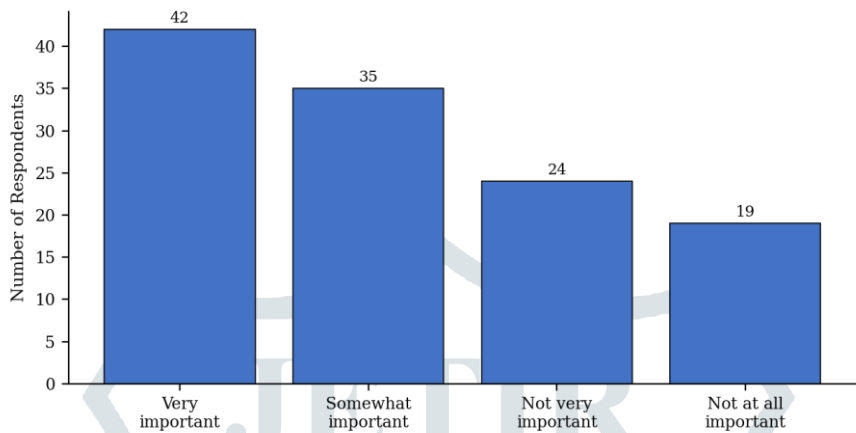


Fig.9 importance of trusting an influencer before purchase

Table 9 importance of trusting an influencer before purchase

Response	Number of Respondents
Very important	42
Somewhat important	35
Not very important	24
Not at all important	19

On what makes an influencer credible, 30 respondents cited expertise in beauty, 28 cited authenticity, 20 cited consistency, 24 cited engagement with followers, and 16 cited other factors (Fig. 10 and Table 10).

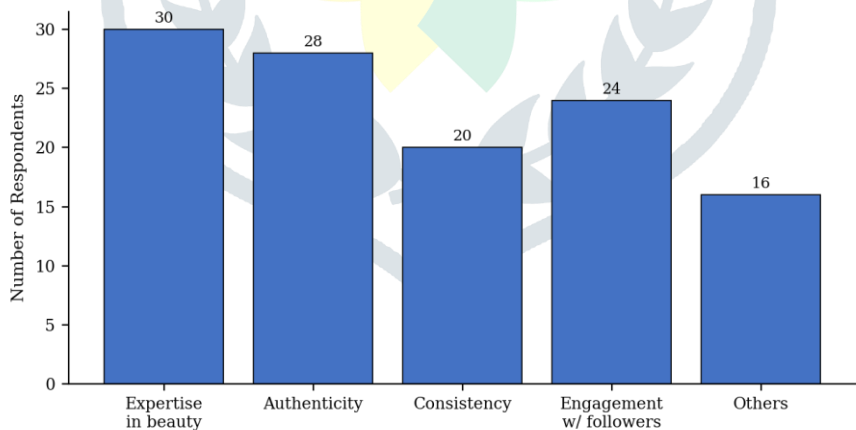


Fig.10 factors determining influencer credibility

Table 10 factors determining influencer credibility

Factor	Number of Respondents
Expertise in beauty	30
Authenticity	28
Consistency	20
Engagement with followers	24
Others	16

4.6 Influencer Content and Product Preferences

Regarding the type of content found most influential, product reviews were cited by the largest share of respondents, followed by tutorials, before-and-after photos, product roundups, and other content types, consistent with the finding that 65% of respondents said product reviews had the biggest impact on their purchase decisions (Fig. 11 and Table 11).

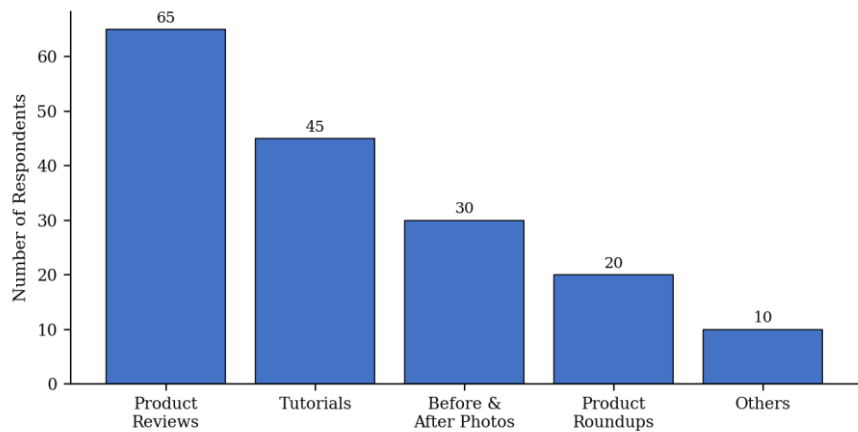


Fig.11 content type found most influential

Table 11 content type found most influential

Content Type	Relative Influence (%)
Product reviews	65
Tutorials	45
Before & after photos	30
Product roundups	20
Others	10

On the cosmetic products most likely to be purchased based on an influencer's recommendation, 45 respondents cited skin care, 28 cited makeup, 15 cited hair care and fragrances combined, and 5 cited other categories (Fig. 12 and Table 12).

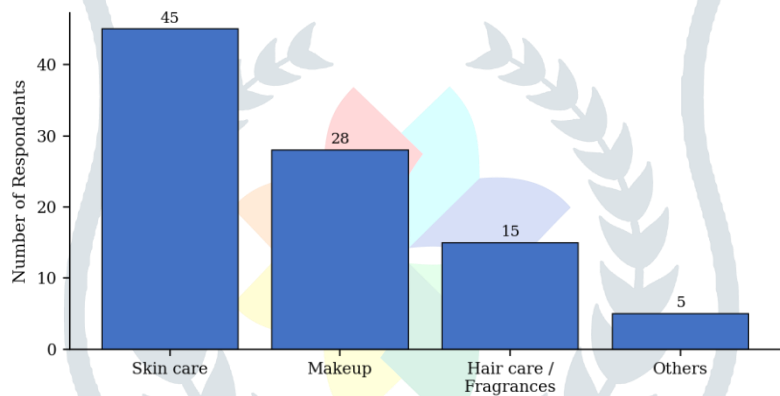


Fig.12 product categories purchased based on influencer recommendation

Table 12 product categories purchased based on influencer recommendation

Product Category	Number of Respondents
Skin care	45
Makeup	28
Hair care / Fragrances	15
Others	5

V. FINDINGS

- 1. Respondents in the 30-48 year age range showed the greatest interest in purchasing cosmetics as a result of social media exposure.
- 2. Women use cosmetic products more frequently than men, with women accounting for 63% of frequent users.
- 3. YouTube is the most widely used platform among respondents (31.6%), followed by TikTok (20.8%).
- 4. About 63% of respondents use social media on a daily basis.
- 5. Nearly 77% of respondents are active on social media, and a notable share follow beauty influencers specifically.
- 6. Among those who purchased cosmetics based on recommendations, 32% did so because of suggestions from social media influencers.
- 7. 45% of respondents preferred personal preference over social media influence when purchasing.
- 8. 45% of respondents said they trusted social media influencers to recommend good cosmetics.
- 9. 65% of respondents said that product reviews had the biggest impact on their purchasing decisions.
- 10. 38% said they would buy skin care products based on influencer recommendations.
- 11. 89% viewed influencer content as a form of marketing campaign encouraging cosmetics purchases.
- 12. 73% said influencer marketing raised their awareness of new cosmetic products.
- 13. 69% reported being affected by promotional products, and 64% said they discover new makeup items on Instagram.

- 14. 52% said they watch videos and read reviews before purchasing new makeup.
- 15. 69% said they repurchase cosmetic products based on influencer suggestions.
- 16. 51% said they remain loyal to their favourite brands, while 33% said they would try new brands based on influencer recommendations.

VI. SUGGESTIONS

1. Since the 30-48 age range shows the strongest response to cosmetics marketing, social media campaigns should focus more on this demographic.
2. As usage is currently concentrated on TikTok and YouTube, marketers should also strengthen their presence on other platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp.
3. While the study population skews female, marketing efforts should also be directed at male consumers to maximize reach.
4. Since a limited share of respondents fully trust social media influencers due to past negative experiences, marketers should focus on building greater credibility and trust.
5. As consumers are largely drawn to cosmetic marketing campaigns, marketers should continue to leverage well-designed campaigns to boost sales.
6. Since a majority of consumers reported being put off by promotional products, marketers should avoid excessive promotional pressure and instead build authentic credibility.
7. As a meaningful share of consumers are willing to try new products based on influencer recommendations, this openness should continue to be leveraged in future social media marketing strategies for cosmetics.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that consumers are greatly impacted by social media marketing for cosmetics. However, there remains a concern regarding the reliability and authenticity of some influencer-driven promotions, which needs to be recognized and addressed by both marketers and platforms. Apart from this, consumers are generally quite satisfied with social media marketing for cosmetics. Thus, social media marketing for cosmetics holds significant potential for continued success in the future, and businesses can definitely take advantage of this trend by building authentic influencer relationships, producing visually appealing and trustworthy content, and maintaining ethical engagement with consumers.

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